

Important updates



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The following article contains important information pertaining to NALC members.

Dues change

There will be a biweekly dues increase for year 2014 due to the November 2013 wage increase. The dues change will take place in Pay Period 1 of 2014 (Dec. 14-27, 2013). This change will be reflected in the dues that will be deducted beginning with the Jan. 3, 2014 paycheck. As a result, the dues increase will be incorporated into the branch reimbursements of Jan. 24, 2014.

The minimum dues structure set forth in Article 7, Section 2 (a) of the *NALC Constitution* is the equivalent of two hours base pay for an NALC Grade 1, Step D letter carrier per month. Since dues are deducted biweekly, this amount will be \$23.44 for 2014. National retains one-third

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of this amount, \$7.81, and remits the other two-thirds to the local branches (with some withheld for state associations and remitted by National Headquarters to the state associations monthly).

Some branches may have set dues higher than the minimum dues structure and may increase local dues during the year, as do some state associations. Any increase in a branch's local dues cannot be processed before Pay Period 4 (Jan. 28, 2014.)

Note: Dues corrections or changes to be made in 2013 cannot be processed after Nov. 5.

Open Season

Open Season for choosing a health benefit plan is Nov. 11-Dec. 9, and I strongly encourage all NALC members to consider enrolling in the NALC Health Benefit Plan, the NALC's own union-run health benefit plan. NALC health benefit representatives and branch officers are reminded that any USPS employee, regardless of bargaining or non-bargaining status, must be full dues-paying members of the NALC when enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Under Article 22 of the *NALC Constitution*, a Health Benefit Plan membership (often referred to as an “Associate Membership”) is available only to retirees who did not maintain their membership in the NALC upon retirement and to all non-postal federal employees. These enrollees of the NALC Health Benefit Plan pay yearly dues of \$36, which are billed in the early part of the year.

Buy union

As I was recently re-elected as a vice president of the Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, I would be remiss in not urging all NALC members to buy union. When you buy union-made products and services, you are protecting working people in our country by helping them earn a livable wage in safe conditions, provide health care for their families, and pursue the American promise of creating a better life for every future generation. Let's all try ethical consumerism.

For Thanksgiving: Whole and deli-style turkey includes Boar's Head, Butterball, Eckrich Deli and Foster Farms. Potato products produced by union members include Ore Ida, Betty Crocker and McCain. Manischewitz, Stroehmann Bakery Products and Kraft provide union-made stuffing, and look to Ocean Spray brand for cranberry products. Vegetable products include Birdseye, Andy Boy, Del Monte and Eurofresh. And please remember to shop in union grocery stores: Albertson's, Cub Foods, Dominick's Finer Foods, Giant, Giant Eagle, Jewel, Kroger, Lucky, Meijer, Pak n'Save, Ralph's, Safeway and Schnucks, to name a few. Don't shop Walmart.

The holiday season will soon be upon us as well, so remember to shop union when purchasing food, beverages (including wine, beer and liquor), pet products, candy, health and beauty items, toys, clothing, sporting goods, appliances, tools, musical instruments, outdoor products, tires and vehicles.

The list above is not all-inclusive. For more information, check out unionlabel.org and labor411.org. Not only will you be informed of union products and services, you also will be made aware of companies that should be boycotted due to bargaining or to other issues.

Veterans Day

This Veterans Day marks the 95th anniversary of the first Armistice Day, when the guns of World War I fell silent across Europe. This year, let all of us give thanks to the men and women of the Armed Forces and the National Guard, as well as their families, for the great sacrifices they have made in the past. To all those serving abroad as well as here at home, we express our thanks.